

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



Natural building blocks for quality of life

April 3, 2006

The Honorable Michael Crapo
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Crapo:

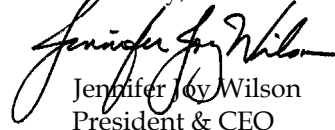
For many years the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association (NSSGA) has called for updating the Endangered Species Act (ESA). To this end, NSSGA proudly endorses the Collaboration for the Recovery of Endangered Species Act (CRESA), and welcomes your contribution to the bipartisan effort. NSSGA believes that CRESA will help change the way the law is administered – for the benefit of endangered species.

The adversarial relationship between the government, supporters of the ESA, and those who are ultimately forced to pay for the recovery of species has limited the effectiveness of the law and ultimately the recovery rate. After 30 years and a recovery rate of .01 percent, it is clear the ESA needs updating. Considering two-thirds of all listed species are on private land, NSSGA applauds the realization that the government needs to work *in partnership* with landowners for the benefit of those species. NSSGA also supports the inclusion of a provision providing a tax credit to those committed to helping conserve species through conservation banks or other site specific measures. By changing the approach the government takes to saving and preserving endangered species from adversarial to one of cooperation and inclusion, we can expect more species to be saved and a higher regard for the law by the public in general.

As the largest mining association by product volume in the world, NSSGA's member companies produce 90 percent of the crushed stone and more than 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the U.S. Aggregates are the largest component of asphalt and concrete. Nearly three billion metric tons of aggregates valued at over \$17.4 billion are estimated by the U.S Geological Survey to have been sold in the U.S. in 2005. Without these important natural products, the nation's infrastructure could not be built or maintained, and commerce and quality of life would be severely reduced. With over 11,000 operations nationwide and a workforce of more than 117,000 men and women, most Congressional Districts are home to multiple aggregate operations.

History teaches us that by working together man can accomplish the impossible. If enacted CRESA will do what many consider the impossible – encouraging people to work together to save endangered and threatened species. For this reason NSSGA and its members support CRESA and thank you for your efforts to improve the ESA– for the benefit of endangered species and their neighbors.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Joy Wilson
President & CEO